



SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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Blue Stamp Travel and Work Experience Abroad are trading names for Blue Stamp Travel Ltd.

Established in 2018, Blue Stamp Travel operates under directors with a long and successful education background with extensive experience in risk management and delivery of educational trips and activities. We carry in excess of 1000 passengers each year and we are therefore well aware of the need for the provision of a safe and secure environment for all passengers especially for children on educational visits. We are large and established enough to prepare and deliver safe and enjoyable trips whilst being small enough to care and retain good communications with our customer; schools, groups, teachers, individuals and parents/carers.

Please find below our Safety Management System applicable for group travel and for individuals. This has been developed in accordance with DCFS Guidelines and reflects advice from recognised safety bodies such as RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents). This guidance complies with current guidelines from the DfE (Department for Education) on organising educational visits. It will also assist the responsible school or group organiser when carrying out their risk-assessment, and demonstrate that they have selected a competent tour operator.

Blue Stamp Travel Ltd is accredited with ABTA (Association of British Travel Agents) and are subject to their Codes of Conduct. This symbolises Blue Stamp's stability and guarantees our customers financial security. Blue Stamp Travel also hold an ATOL (Air Travel Organisers' Licensing) accreditation, which means that our tours by air and the flights involved are ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority.

Blue Stamp are accredited with IALC (International Association of Language Centres) as a Premium Partner, FLE (Français Langue Etrangère) and FEDELE (Federación Española de Escuelas de Español) as well as pending accreditation with International House and ICEF. These accreditations reflect that we are always seeking the very best quality provision.

Blue Stamp are a member of the Federation of Small Businesses.

In addition to our own Public, Products and Tour Operators Liability Insurance of £10 million we include £5 million of liability cover for the Group Leader. We are endorsed by teachers, schools and trusts throughout the UK. We are confident that our Health and Safety policies and systems will meet the requirements of your Trust, Local Authority or Governing Body and we hope that it will help you in planning your next tour with Blue Stamp Travel.

Steve Manderson
Managing Director
12/07/24

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
1.1 Traveller Safety	3
1.2 Employee Responsibilities	3
1.3 Goals	3
1.4 Guarantee	3
2. Our Obligations and Objectives	4
3. Meeting Our Responsibilities.....	5
3.1 Responsibilities of Blue Stamp Travel Staff within the Safety Management System	5
3.2 Directors’ Responsibilities	5
3.3 Responsibilities of All Staff	5
3.4 Hotel Contractors and Auditors	6
3.5 Accident Investigation	7
3.6 “Near Miss” Events	7
3.7 Incident Reporting	7
3.8 Assistance to Clients	8
4. Safety Management of Accommodation	8
4.1 Accommodation Audits	8
4.2 Homestays	9
4.3 Information Management	10
5. Safety Management of Travel Arrangements	11
5.1 British Coaches.....	11
5.2 Foreign Coaches.....	12
5.3 Coaches Provided by Agents.....	12
5.4 Public Transport (Rail, Bus, Metro, etc...)	13
5.5 Ferries and Eurotunnel	13
5.6 Air Transport	13
6. Attractions.....	13
6.1 Incident Reports.....	13
7. Emergency Procedures.....	13
8. Accreditations.....	14
9. Insurance.....	14

1. Introduction

1.1 Traveller Safety

Travellers’ safety is our prime concern. Blue Stamp Travel is committed to providing the highest levels of safety throughout all of our services, packages, and tours. This document explains the policies and procedures implemented by Blue Stamp Travel to ensure that all group and individual bookings operated by Blue Stamp Travel are as safe as is reasonably practicable, and that such policies and procedures are in accordance with our advisory bodies’ best practice. In particular the “**Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits**” published by the Department for Education (DfE formerly the Department for Children, Schools and Families DCSF) on 26/11/2008 and the guidance published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

1.2 Employee Responsibilities

All employees are required to read and understand our Safety Management System to demonstrate their commitment to our culture of safety management.

1.3 Goals

Blue Stamp Travel’s goal is to ensure that, as far as it is reasonably practicable, the transport and accommodation used during trips operated by Blue Stamp Travel is clean, fit for its purpose and complies with the appropriate legislation and meets, at least, the minimum standards required by law in the country it is used and by Blue Stamp Travel.

1.4 Guarantee

Blue Stamp Travel guarantees that it complies with the requirements for inclusive tours as defined in the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations (PTR) Act 1992. The main requirements are as follows:

	PTR Requirement	Action
a.	Be bonded to give our customers financial protection	Blue Stamp Travel has bonds with ABTA and the Civil Aviation Authority (ATOL).
b.	Have sufficient liability insurance to cover the negligence of our staff, servants, agents and suppliers.	Blue Stamp Travel has £10 million liability cover.
c.	Make clear statements on what is included in the package and what is extra, as well as the basis on which any changes can be made.	There are clear statements on our website, communications with schools and students and on quotation documents. We welcome any queries for clarity and respond to these appropriately.



2. Our Obligations and Objectives

It is Blue Stamp Travel's responsibility and prime objective to ensure that all our group and individual trips are safe and that all our suppliers are adopting good working practices and comply with current legislation.

We will achieve this by:

- 2.1 Taking every reasonable measure to reduce the risk of accidents.
- 2.2 Maintaining a Safety Management System in line with the requirements of DCFS **Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits** Act of 1998.
- 2.3 Ensuring that our products and services comply wherever applicable with the current local, national and/or international standards.
- 2.4 Maintaining accurate and up to date records of Health and Safety audits when they are carried out by appropriately experienced staff.
- 2.5 Actively promoting a positive Health and Safety culture, including continual assessment and improvement of operational Health and Safety standards among our staff, our clients, and our supplier organisations worldwide. (This will consider feedback from audits, inspections, and previous customers.)
- 2.6 Training our staff using internal and external qualified experts, where necessary, to the degree that they are able to give informed and appropriate advice, make informed decisions and carry out effective assessments of all our suppliers.
- 2.7 Ensuring all staff are trained to respond quickly and effectively to any information which may prejudice the integrity of this Safety Management System or which constitutes an emergency.
- 2.8 Using reputable providers of accommodation and services to ensure that local support and scrutiny of provision is in place.
- 2.9 Carrying out risk assessments of accommodation, transport, and other prepaid services in line with the required risk assessment frameworks.
- 2.10 Actively monitoring the performance of accommodation and transport and actively seeking feedback from groups travelling to our various destinations.
- 2.11 Reviewing the SMS on an annual basis and training staff in any changes.



3. Meeting Our Responsibilities

In order to meet our responsibilities, we have developed a formal Safety Management System which sets out the standards which we expect to be maintained for each of the key components of our group and individual trips. Additionally, the Safety Management System describes the measures which we take to monitor and review such standards.

3.1 Responsibilities of Blue Stamp Travel Staff within the Safety Management System

Records are kept to indicate that all staff at Blue Stamp Travel have read this document, had it explained to them and understood it. It is a requirement that any new member of staff with responsibility for making arrangements for students' travel, accommodation or work placement read and understand this document alongside the general Blue Stamp Travel Policy on **Health and Safety** and that any areas which are not understood are discussed with their line manager.

3.2 Directors' Responsibilities

- 3.2.1 The Directors are responsible for the creation, implementation, maintenance, and monitoring of the Safety Management System. Whilst the Directors retain this collective responsibility, the Director responsible for co-ordinating and advising on Health and Safety matters is the Managing Director. Individual Directors take responsibility for implementation of the system in those areas under their control.
- 3.2.2 The Directors are responsible for ensuring that an appropriately qualified independent external safety consultant is appointed, when necessary, to ensure the continued integrity of the system and to advise on improvements and best practice.
- 3.2.3 The Directors are responsible for ensuring that adequate funding and time is available for staff training in Health and Safety.
- 3.2.4 The Directors are responsible for ensuring that all staff are trained appropriately in Health and Safety, and for reviewing all systems to ensure that any reported incidents demanding remedial action are reacted to in a timely and appropriate manner, in order to minimise any future risks.
- 3.2.5 Directors will review feedback forms submitted by Group Leaders and group representatives (e.g. teachers) and take remedial action to resolve safety issues and annually review the issues raised by Group Leader feedback forms to identify trends and required remedial actions.

3.3 Responsibilities of All Staff

All Staff are responsible for:

- 3.3.1 Ensuring that the directors' policies regarding the Safety Management System are fully complied with in every respect.
- 3.3.2 Monitoring performance of the Safety Management System and providing feedback immediately on any perceived risk that might give rise to concern.
- 3.3.3 Reporting any serious incidents to the appropriate manager/director and/or supplier where there are areas where improvement might be necessary.
- 3.3.4 Keeping up to date with safety requirements and practices applicable to the provision of group and educational tours and attend training as required by the directors.
- 3.3.5 Organising and utilising company assets (staff, finance, and equipment) appropriately to ensure compliance with the directors' policies on Health and Safety.
- 3.3.6 Maintaining and managing the recording systems relevant to the Safety Management System.
- 3.3.7 Ensuring any required remedial action is successfully implemented.
- 3.3.8 Making decisions within the bounds of this policy as to whether accommodation meets Blue Stamp Travel requirements and should be used for any booking.
- 3.3.9 Bringing to the attention of the directors any situation that has the potential to cause clients' concern.
- 3.3.10 Bringing to the attention of the directors any noted weaknesses in the Safety Management System.
- 3.3.11 Actively seeking out and report any "near miss" incidents.

3.4 Hotel Contractors and Auditors

Hotel contractors and auditors are responsible to the directors for:

- 3.4.1 Ensuring that the directors' policies regarding the Safety Management System are fully complied with in every aspect.
- 3.4.2 Auditing hotels and youth accommodation in accordance with our standards as set out in the accommodation section of this policy.
- 3.4.3 Checking that all hotels, hostels and youth centres comply with local legislation.
- 3.4.4 Ensuring that all accommodation to be used by Blue Stamp is covered by current Public Liability Insurance, establishing the level of cover and, where possible, obtaining a copy of the policy. Ensuring that each accommodation unit to be used meets, as a minimum, the criteria specified in the section "Safety Management of Accommodation".

- 3.4.5 Following up on, resolving and taking appropriate action with regard to any reported incident which may bring into question the safety of any accommodation being used by Blue Stamp Travel.
- 3.4.6 Assessing all hotels and making a judgement on whether or not to recommend a hotel to a customer based on all the information available.
- 3.4.7 Reporting serious incidents immediately to the directors and keeping them informed when remedial action is needed following an incident and the progress made in taking remedial action.

3.5 Accident Investigation

- 3.5.1 Accident reporting is compulsory.
- 3.5.2 All accidents are reported and investigated by a director.
- 3.5.3 An accident report and investigation form is completed which is designed to capture key information and lead to a conclusion with respect to the causes and the identification and implementation of remedial action.

These forms cover:

- Date, time and place of accident
- Who was involved
- Witnesses
- Events leading up to the accident
- Outcomes of the event, e.g. injury or damage, and the severity
- Causes of injury or damage
- Immediate and underlying causes of the accident
- Emergency action taken at the time to prevent a reoccurrence or to minimise injury/damage
- Further action required to prevent a reoccurrence

3.6 “Near Miss” Events

Both clients and staff are strongly encouraged to complete an accident report form for an occurrence that could potentially have resulted in an accident. These are classified as a “near miss” and information is used to strengthen safety management.

3.7 Incident Reporting

Incident reporting is compulsory.

- 3.7.1 All incidents are reported and investigated by a director.



3.7.2 An incident report and investigation form is completed designed to capture key information and lead to a conclusion with respect to the causes and the identification and implementation of remedial action.

3.7.3 All accident, near miss and incident reporting is reviewed at least annually with a view to incorporating improvements in the Safety Management System.

3.8 Assistance to Clients

Assistance to clients includes but is not limited to the following:

- Inspections Visits: Blue Stamp Travel provides the means for teachers to inspect a destination in advance of travelling with their group.
- Risk Assessments: Blue Stamp Travel provides risk assessments to supplement teacher's own risk assessments.
- Additional Safety Guidance: Health and Safety guidance is issued to every student electronically via accounts on Babel with further selected documents printed in addition. Further copies are available for teachers via the website **Teacher Resource** area and dispatched in paper format prior to trips where requested.

4. Safety Management of Accommodation

All accommodation contracted by Blue Stamp Travel for schools or group tours will comply with local legislation with respect to fire and general safety. Accommodation is contracted by Blue Stamp Travel staff or alternatively through reputable agents in the country to be visited. Where agents are used, they are advised by Blue Stamp Travel of the high importance of safety in all the accommodation that they provide for us with expectations made clear in advance of booking.

Blue Stamp Travel requires an agency agreement confirming that hotels provided for our groups conform to local, national and European standards as appropriate, prior to making any bookings with an agency.

4.1 Accommodation Audits

4.1.1 Standard Audits

Where accommodations are used frequently (greater than 5 times per year), they will receive a standard audit and risk assessment by Blue Stamp Travel prior to being used by Blue Stamp Travel customers to ensure that our minimum requirements in terms of health and safety are met. Blue Stamp Travel staff will conduct a standard audit and risk assessment of the accommodation which will be recorded on our admin system. A copy of the STF standard audit form constitutes part of this Safety Management System.

4.1.2 Supplementary Audits



All accommodation used on 5 or more occasions in a year is listed as 'frequent use' and a supplementary audit is carried out by Blue Stamp Travel. The STF supplementary audit is a detailed written report on the property, examining safety, security, and hygiene. In addition to the audit the Blue Stamp Travel contractor will further provide:

- An accommodation health and safety questionnaire and risk assessment
- Evidence of public liability insurance
- A copy of the fire certificate if available (if either is unavailable a signed declaration from the hotelier indicating that insurance is in force and that all local fire standards have been met / will be obtained)

Blue Stamp Travel will carry out a Supplementary Audit of all frequent use units of accommodation at least once every three years.

4.2 Homestays

Blue Stamp Travel uses agencies to provide host families for any groups or individual that wish to use this type of accommodation. Both Blue Stamp Travel and the agency will adhere to the following rules and guidelines throughout the various stages:

4.2.1 Selection, Allocation and Information Provided to Hosts

Special consideration will be given to accommodating in single, pairs or students

For the selection and allocation of hosts, the following factors will be considered:

- Gender
- Cultural considerations
- Faith considerations
- Ability to provide for different dietary requirements
- Presence of animals in the household
- Ability to support medical needs and disabilities
- Distance from language school and/or work placement
- Facilities available

In order to allow for the most accurate selection of Host Families, information is gathered via student online accounts which will then be sent to the agency.

This information will include:

- Name
- Age
- Gender
- Dietary requirements
- Medical considerations
- Cultural considerations
- Faith considerations





- Contact numbers, including emergency contacts
- Sharing preferences

4.2.2 Host Information

When a host has been sourced for a student(s), the agency will provide information about the host to Blue Stamp Travel. This will be recorded on the Blue Stamp Admin system before distributing it to students. For school groups, a copy will be shared with the teacher in charge. This includes contact information and a map of the location of the accommodation.

4.2.3 Group Preparation

It is important that Group Leaders are able to manage exceptional circumstances whilst away with a group (should the need arise).

To help achieve this, Blue Stamp Travel ensure:

- Students are provided of 24-hour UK emergency contact number.
- Students are provided contact details for the local Group Leader (for group trips) or language school contact (for individual language school bookings).
- Group Leaders are provided the address and contact details of each student and host.
- Group Leaders have a process and means to move pupils away from unsuitable accommodation or to a place of safety if necessary.
- Students and Group Leaders are briefed ensuring that a Group Leader can 'visit at once' if required at any time of day.
- Students are provided an emergency 24/7 phone number staffed by one of the directors based in the UK.

4.2.4 Evaluation

For group trips accompanied by a Group Leader:

- After students have moved into their homestay, Group Leaders will make physical, telephone or messaging contact with the students.
- Group Leaders are able to carry out accommodation inspections on request.
- Monitoring feedback is requested from the Group Leader which includes a section for comment on the standard of accommodation provided.

For individuals travelling to language school and using homestay accommodation:

- Students will be made aware that they should contact the language school or Blue Stamp head office or the 24/7 emergency number if there are any concerns that need raising.

4.3 Information Management

All information relating to Health and Safety audits will be held in records relating to every accommodation unit used by Blue Stamp Travel tours. An accommodation log will indicate the dates

of last audits together with projected dates for future audits. Copies of audits and risk assessments, fire certificates, insurance details and any declarations in addition to the health and safety questionnaire will be held as part of our Safety Management System. In the case of agent contracted accommodation the minimum standards declaration will be held. Records will also include details of the members of staff who have carry out audits.

5. Safety Management of Travel Arrangements

The safety of our travel arrangements is of paramount importance in Blue Stamp Travel's operations. We work with selected transport providers who provide industry specific safety reassurances. The following policies apply to each element of transport:

5.1 British Coaches

British Coach Travel is regulated by the Department for Transport.

An operator licence is only granted after satisfying the requirement of professional competence for either national or international operations as appropriate, establishing good repute and appropriate financial standing. Vehicles must be properly maintained. The Traffic Commissioners look very closely at the arrangements to make sure that vehicles meet the required standards.

The Traffic Commissioner ensures that the licensee is able to obey the rules which cover speed limits, proper insurance of vehicles and especially drivers' hours rules.

The licensee is fully responsible for hired vehicles as if he was the permanent operator and also the employer of the driver.

- 5.1.1 Compliance is monitored by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency. Blue Stamp Travel is **not** responsible for duplicating the work of these regulatory bodies.
- 5.1.2 Blue Stamp Travel selects reputable British coach companies for Blue Stamp Travel transport. For all coach operators, prior to first time use, a copy of the operating licence is obtained, together with motor vehicle and public liability insurance. All companies used confirm contractually that they comply with all national, local trade and other laws, regulations, rules and codes of practice including that all their drivers must be DBS checked. All British coaches contracted will meet Blue Stamp Travel minimum standards. Confirmation that contract conditions are still being met will be obtained every 3 years. In addition to the contract being issued, prior to first time use, all coach suppliers will be subject to a standard coach audit.
- 5.1.3 A preferred list of coach suppliers is maintained including all operators that are regularly used, or anticipated to be used more than five times in any one year. These companies will undergo a supplementary audit which will be carried out by a qualified auditor and will include such checks as a sample of their vehicles, driver vetting, and operator history and maintenance. In addition, the coach company's past record is checked for both prosecutions and any disciplinary appearance before the Traffic Commissioner. Supplementary audits will be carried



out a maximum of 3-year intervals as long as the use remains regular to ensure continued compliance with our requirements.

5.1.4 Coach companies are required to provide the following documentation to Blue Stamp Travel:
Copy of the company's Operators Licence

- Copy of their European Union Operator Licence
- Copy of their fleet Insurance Certificate
- Copy of their public Liability Insurance
- A current vehicle list
- Details of breakdown organisations to which the company belongs
- A 24-hour contact number

5.1.5 Blue Stamp Travel keep a schedule of all coach companies used by Blue Stamp Travel. This demonstrates the current audit status of each company and copies of insurance, and operating licences are reviewed and updated annually.

The Audits will be reviewed and recorded in the following categories:

- Copy of their European Union Operator Licence
- High Conformity
- Acceptable Conformity
- Unacceptable

Any coaches deemed as unacceptable will be removed from the system and will not be reinstated unless evidence is obtained that any defects have been rectified.

5.1.6 Coaches required for late bookings made within four months of travel, cannot be guaranteed to be selected from the preferred supplier list.

5.2 Foreign Coaches

All foreign coaches used for transfers and excursions must conform to all local, national and international standards, including driver hour requirements, with a minimum requirement that the operators hold an Operator's Licence, Fleet Insurance and Public Liability Insurance. We request that all reasonable measures be taken to vet driver suitability and we stipulate the maximum age of vehicles to be used.

5.3 Coaches Provided by Agents

In countries where we use local agents, our agents are required to ensure that local standards are met as a minimum. Where agents are used, they are advised by Blue Stamp Travel of the high importance of safety in all transport arrangements that they provide for us. Blue Stamp Travel ensures that they complete an agent's contract confirming that transport arrangements provided for our groups conform to local, national and European standards as appropriate. Confirmation that agent contract conditions are still being met will be obtained every 3 years. All coach suppliers used by agents may be subject to a standard coach audit prior to first time use and thereafter at a maximum of three-year intervals.



5.4 Public Transport (Rail, Bus, Metro, etc...)

The appropriate authorities in each country determine regulation of public transport. Blue Stamp Travel is therefore unable to implement any additional measures.

5.5 Ferries and Eurotunnel

All Ferries and Eurotunnel are regulated nationally and Blue Stamp Travel are therefore unable to implement any additional measures.

5.6 Air Transport

The Civil Aviation Authority regulates all air transport from the UK. This authority operates to very strict safety criteria, so no additional practical safety measures are considered necessary.

6. Attractions

The majority of attractions/sites visited by schools on Blue Stamp Travel are open to the public. Individuals, schools and groups visit these attractions/sites at their own risk.

Where Blue Stamp Travel staff accompany groups they do so as guides, not as supervisors. The site operators are responsible for the health and safety of all their visitors including groups travelling with Blue Stamp Travel.

If a visit has been prearranged and paid for as part of the Blue Stamp Travel package, such arrangements fall within the scope of the "Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations Act 1992". In such cases Blue Stamp Travel will use reasonable endeavours to obtain from providers of visits and excursions.

- Evidence that health and safety has been evaluated
- An outline of any potential remaining risks the provider wishes to bring to the attention of the group

6.1 Incident Reports

Working as we do with such a wide range of attractions and destinations, it is impossible for Blue Stamp to retain an up-to-date record of health and safety requirements. However, we continually strive to select activities and attractions that we feel align with our own views on quality and safety. We welcome feedback from school party leaders with current information and ask them to bring any concerns to our attention.

Blue Stamp Travel staff submit a review of attractions and activity providers in their end of trip review.

7. Emergency Procedures



Blue Stamp Travel maintains and practises emergency procedures to follow in the event of a serious incident. The Emergency Procedure manual is regularly reviewed and updated.

The Blue Stamp Travel emergency contact is contactable 24-hours a day via either the main office number or mobile phone out of hours whilst groups are on tour. All travellers will be given information on how to contact the emergency contact in their MyAccount and as part of their final travel pack where one is sent. The emergency contact will remain available at all times and have details of all groups currently on tour and emergency contact numbers for all suppliers. The emergency contact will log all calls. If a call represents an incident which has compromised the safety of a customer, an incident report will be completed. These reports are logged and used to review procedures and determine priorities for risk management.

The Crisis Management System is regularly tested and reviewed in the light of incidents, accidents and near misses during the course of a year. Changes and amendments are considered following each incident and appropriate measures noted and implemented as necessary. New key staff are made aware of emergency procedures that will impact on their role and/or action required by them in response as part of their induction process. Training is undertaken as required.

8. Accreditations

A list of our accreditations can be found on our website on the "[About Us](#)" page.

9. Insurance

Details of our insurance cover can be found on our website on the "[Insurance](#)" page.

